


REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are active in the present application. Claims 1-23 have been amended to remove multiple dependencies. Claims 19 has been amended for clarity. Claim 22 has been amended to further describe the manufacturing installation. Support for amended Claim 22 is found on page 27, line 12 through page 31, line 16. Claims 24-30 are new claims. Support for the new claims is found in the original claims. No new matter is added. An action on the merits and allowance of claims is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

--3. (Amended) Process according to [either of claims 1 and 2] claim 1, in which said dense fluid under pressure is in the super-critical state.

4. (Amended) Process according to [any one of claims 1 and 3] claim 1, in which compression/decompression cycles are carried out.

7. (Amended) Process according to [any one of claims 1 to 6] claim 1, in which a co-solvent is added to the dense fluid under pressure.

10. (Amended) Process according to [any one of claims 7 to 8] claim 7, in which said co-solvent is added to the dense fluid under pressure with a content of 0.01 to 10% by weight.

12. (Amended) Process for selective extraction of contaminating organic compounds from cork or a cork-based material, in which said material is treated by [the process according to any one of claims 7 to 11] contacting said material with a dense fluid under pressure at a temperature of from 10 to 120°C and at a pressure of from 10 to 600 bars and adding a co-solvent to the dense fluid under pressure.

16. (Amended) Extraction process according to [any one of claims 12 to 15] claim 12, in which the dense fluid under pressure is CO₂ and the co-solvent is water or an aqueous solution.

17. (Amended) Treatment or extraction process according to [any one of claims 1 to 16] claim 1, in which the fluid and the extracts are separated by one or several steps, after the treatment or the extraction by the dense fluid under pressure, and the gaseous fluid is recycled.

18. (Amended) Process according to [any one of claims 1 to 17] claim 1, in which said cork or said cork-based material is also subjected to a mechanical and/or chemical treatment before or after said treatment or said extraction by the dense fluid under pressure, and particularly treatment by hot or boiling water commonly called a "boiling treatment".

19. (Amended) Process according to [any one of claims 1 to 18] claim 1, in which said cork or said cork-based material is shaped before or after said treatment or said extraction using the dense fluid under pressure; [either] or earlier than said optional mechanical and/or chemical treatment, [if any,] preceding said treatment or said extraction by the dense fluid under pressure; or later than said optional mechanical and/or chemical treatment, [[if any, after] following said treatment or said extraction by the dense fluid under pressure.

21. (Amended) Manufacturing process for bottle corks made of cork or made of a cork-base material, comprising at least one treatment or extraction step according to [any one of claims 1 to 18] claim 1.

22. (Amended) Manufacturing installation for parts made of cork or of a cork-based material such as bottle corks comprising a treatment or extraction installation by bringing said cork or said material into contact with a dense fluid under pressure under the conditions

specified in [any one of claims 1 to 18] claim 1, the said installation comprising: means of bringing the cork or a cork-based material into contact with a dense fluid under pressure in the form of an extractor or autoclave (1); means of circulating the fluid and bringing it to the dense state under pressure comprising a pump, a liquefier and a super-critical exchanger; separation means firstly for separating organic compounds extracted from said cork and said cork-based material in liquid form, and secondly the fluid in gaseous form; and means of recycling the fluid thus separated from the extractor by using the means of circulating the fluid and bringing it into the dense state and under pressure.

Claims 24-30 (New).--